2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

carry the necessary loads, so that the whole party forms quite an imposing gathering. It takes with it one complete pig's carcass, a full load of chi-millet and sixteen pounds of rice, half of which should be parched.

When the procession arrives within about half a mile of the bridegroom's home two boys are sent out to meet it. They take with them two bamboos of *chi*. One of these is given to the *Rum fat-bo*, and the other to the *Aku*. They first offer a little to the gods, after which the rest is distributed and consumed on the spot. In the meantime the two boys run back as hard as they can go and give warning that the procession is approaching.

A small shed, known as *Gor shun*, has been previously constructed outside the house and a number of bamboo containers filled with *chi* are now placed ready inside it. The bridal party is escorted straight to the *Gor shun*, where it immediately consumes the *chi* without further ceremony; the idea being to make all concerned a little intoxicated as quickly as possible, in order to make the party go with a swing. A light meal is now served, and a special pot of ceremonial unstrained *chi*, known as *Chi-lok*, is offered. This is covered with a cloth, and after being ceremonially offered is taken away again inside the house. It is not drunk and is used for libations to the gods.

As soon as the party has rested a little it is escorted inside the house, where the guests, usually the whole of the village, have already gathered and are probably no longer sober. Each member of the party prostrates himself three times in front of the altar; after which all sit down on the floor, ranging themselves in a line along one wall, the bridegroom's attendants being seated along the opposite wall.

While a Mun is making a sacrifice to the family gods and demons of the girl's family in one room, the ceremony of handing the bride over takes place in another. For this purpose the respective *Pi-bos* stand up facing one another in front of the altar, but everyone else remains seated on the floor.

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

231 These stalls for the cattle consist of a protecting roof
343 supported on a bamboo frame. On the sloping side there is a little platform about ½ a meter high, which is used as a rack and is enclosed with bamboo posts. Here the fodder is piled,—grass and the branches and leaves of certain trees and shrubs. Little huts are used as stalls for the goats. These are raised about one meter high on bamboo posts. A bamboo gangway over which the goats cross into the hut, leads to the door. For the poultry, there is a little hut raised on bamboo posts about two meters above the ground. The poultry get into the hut by walking over a post with notches cut into it. In this manner the goats and poultry are protected against the wild animals. Every farm has a few dogs of a wretched paria breed. Horses and donkeys are rare.

342 The house of the Rong tribesman differs from that of the Nepalese, Bhutanese and Tibetans. It is so built on the slope, that the back wall rests against a stone foundation. A little path runs between the rear wall and the mountain slope, and this leads to the door either directly or through a little stone stairway. In front of the wall in the direction of the slope, a terrace is levelled out and on this there are two or three rows of columns made of square-cut tree trunks which support a balcony of planks. Over this balcony are walls made of pannels which are either filled in with wooden boards or with bamboo slats which are smeared with a layer of mud. A few openings are left in the walls which serve as windows and these are closed with the aid of sliding boards. The construction of the roof is peculiar. It consists of three sections; one of these is the middle ridge roof and two gable roofs. While the ground plan of the house is square, the roof is oval. It is covered with a special variety of grass held in place with bamboo slats. On the outer side a gallery runs either all around the four walls or around one wall only. (Fig. 29-32).

353 The inside of the square house is divided into several
354 parts. The biggest room is the fireplace. The planks of the floor along the back wall are covered with a thick layer of clay and are set in an edging of clay. In the centre there are three stones on which the kettles are placed. In larger families there are two fire-

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

places made of five stones. The third stone in the middle is common to both and is long enough to support a kettle on each of its outer extremities. Since the stones are placed with a view to holding larger kettles little iron tripods with rings are placed between the stones so as to permit the use of little kettles. Wood is used for fuel. About 1 and ½ meter above the fire a bamboo framework shelf is suspended for holding the kitchen utensils, fuel and other articles. The fireplace stretches across the entire width of the house, as it is the chief work-room, dining-room and, at night, the dormitory. In addition to this there are other little rooms shut off by wooden partitions. Some of these have a roof made of bamboo slats. All types of belongings are stored up over this ceiling which can be approached by the help of a tree trunk notched at intervals to serve as stairs. Occasionally one finds an additional partition which serves as an altar on which sacrifices are offered. This is, very likely, a borrowing from Buddhism.

The pig sties are sometimes located under the house, sometimes at the side. Near the house are situated the stables for cattle and goats and the poultry cages, together with other store houses. The entire settlement in some cases is completely enclosed with a bamboo fence.

Individual farmhouses are as a rule all by themselves. But there are also settlements which comprise of two, three or four houses. This kind of dwelling, a kind of building on piles, is characteristic of the Rong, but has its parallels in South-East Asia and South China.

The ancient costume of the Rong consists of two coarse striped widths of cloth which are held in place over the shoulders by means of a clasp, and about the loins with the aid of a cloth girdle. It reaches up to the knees. Both men and women wear trousers which come below the knees. Sometimes the men wear a short shirt, while the women wear a bodice. This was the ancient costume and the material for this was woven by the Lepchas themselves. Today the practice of weaving has almost died out. The Lepchas purchase ready-made materials. In place of the old style the women have taken over the Tibetan style in an ever increasing degree; the long dress without sleeves (the Tibetan

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

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27. Lepcha farmer winnowing rice

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28. Lepcha shepherd with rain-cap

[End Plate 10]

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

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39. Lepcha girl cutting bamboo

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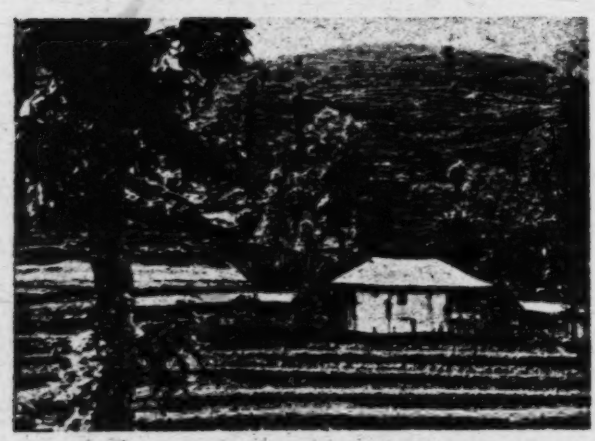

40. Cultivations of the Rai

[End Plate 16]